

CHAPTER 4

1. SUMMARY OF WEST NILE VIRUS PREVENTION ACTIVITIES - 2004

This Chapter reflects local public health agencies' activities to prevent and control West Nile Virus (WNV). The majority of agencies are very involved in public health protection activities, primarily through the use of surveillance to identify where risks are highest, and through use of education and information on how to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. Actual intervention to reduce mosquito-breeding habitats, and/or to kill larvae and adult mosquitoes, is more likely to be done by other city or county governmental units than by local public health agencies.

Public Education: 99% of local public health agencies conduct public outreach activities promoting mosquito bite prevention strategies. Sixty-nine percent (69%) specifically target their outreach to adults over 50 years old, the segment of population at the greatest risk of serious consequences of WNV. Ninety-three percent (93%) of agencies consider themselves to be the primary source in their community for information on WNV prevention. (See Graphs 8.1 thru 8.3.3 and Data Tables 8.3.1 thru 8.3.3)

Over 96% of agencies use poster, brochures and press releases to inform the public on ways to prevent exposure to WNV. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of agencies use flyers as well, and over half (57%) also do presentations and participate in media interviews to share health protection information. (See Graph 8.4 and Data Table 8.4)

Surveillance: 74% of local public health agencies submit dead birds for WNV testing, but only 20% collect adult mosquitoes or larvae for testing. Approximately one-third (33%) of agencies plot testing results on a map in order to visually demonstrate the geographic areas affected. (See Graph 8.5.1, 8.5.2 & 8.5.5 and Data Tables 8.5.1, 8.5.2 & 8.5.5)

Response to Public: 58% of agencies respond to citizen reports of large numbers of mosquitoes; 29% actually assess mosquito-breeding habitat. Only 12% of agencies enforce ordinances related to breeding habitats or call upon law enforcement to assist in eliminating breeding areas. Thirty-two percent (32%) of agencies report that other city or county governmental units enforce nuisance ordinances specifically addressing mosquito habitats. (See Graphs 8.1 thru 8.3.1, 8.5.3, 8.5.4 & 8.6.3 and Data Tables 8.1, 8.2, 8.5.3, 8.5.4, & 8.6.3)

Twenty percent (20%) of local public health agencies conduct activities to prevent development of mosquito larvae and 10% spray chemicals to kill adult mosquitoes. Other local governmental units are more likely to perform these activities. Thirty-five percent (35%) of agencies report that other city or county governmental units use chemicals or other methods to prevent development of larvae and to kill adult

mosquitoes. (See Graphs 8.5.6, 8.5.7 & 8.6.1 thru 8.6.3 and Data Tables 8.5.6, 8.5.7 & 8.6.1 thru 8.6.3)

Planning Prevention and Control: 61% of agencies annually develop a plan to prevent and control WNV, and 48% involve other agencies in the planning process. (See Graphs 8.5.8 & 8.5.9 and Data Tables 8.5.8 & 8.5.9)

Public Health Policy: 17% of local agencies believe local citizens would have no reservations, and 29% believe there would be some reservations, regarding enforcement actions enabled by local nuisance ordinances to eliminate mosquito breeding habitat, however, 42% are unsure of public acceptance of public policy of this nature. More agencies (29%) believe that there would be no reservations if non-enforceable mediation activities were conducted to resolve complaints related to mosquito breeding habitat. Thirty-five percent (35%) of agencies are unsure of the level of public acceptance of non-enforceable mediation activities. (See Graphs 8.7.1 & 8.7.2 and Data Tables 8.7.1 & 8.7.2)